

# KOUNTZE MEMORIAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

## A CITY-WIDE CHURCH WITH A WORLD-WIDE MINISTRY

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December 30, 2023  
December 31, 2023

5:00 PM  
9:00 AM & 11:00 AM

### LESSONS and CAROLS SUNDAY



*"The tradition of the Lessons & Carols service goes back to 19<sup>th</sup> century England. This special service proclaims the Word not through a sermon but through nine 'lessons,' or scripture readings, and nine accompanying carols. This worship honors the structure of this traditional Lessons and Carols while incorporating different scripture readings and carols to tell the Christmas story."*

## PRELUDE

## GATHERING

### WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

### CALL TO WORSHIP \*

- P** In days to come, the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be raised above the hills;
- C** **all the nations shall stream to it.**
- P** Many peoples shall come and say,
- C** **"Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths."**
- P** For out of Zion shall go forth instruction, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.
- C** **He shall judge between the nations, and shall arbitrate for many peoples;**
- P** they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks;
- C** **nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.**
- P** O house of Jacob, come,
- C** **let us walk in the light of the Lord!**

*(stand)*

### PROCESSIONAL CAROL

*Angels, from the Realms of Glory*

**ELW 275 vs. 1,2,4**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <p><b>1</b> Angels, from the realms of glory,<br/>wing your flight o'er all the earth;<br/>once you sang creation's story,<br/>now proclaim Messiah's birth:<br/>Come and worship, come and worship,<br/>worship Christ, the newborn king.</p> | <p><b>2</b> Shepherds, in the fields abiding,<br/>watching o'er your flocks by night,<br/>God with us is now residing,<br/>yonder shines the infant light.<br/>Come and worship, come and worship,<br/>worship Christ, the newborn king.</p> |
| <p><b>4</b> All creation, join in praising<br/>God, the Father, Spirit, Son,<br/>evermore your voices raising<br/>to the eternal Three in One.<br/>Come and worship, come and worship,<br/>worship Christ, the newborn king.</p>               |  |

Text: James Montgomery, 1771-1854, alt., sts. 1-3; Salisbury Hymn Book, 1857, st. 4

## THE FIRST LESSON

Isaiah 11:1-10

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. <sup>2</sup>The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. <sup>3</sup>His delight shall be in the fear of the LORD. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide by what his ears hear; <sup>4</sup>but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. <sup>5</sup>Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist, and faithfulness the belt around his loins. <sup>6</sup>The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. <sup>7</sup>The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. <sup>8</sup>The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den. <sup>9</sup>They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain; for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. <sup>10</sup>On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

**A** Word of God, Word of Life.

**G** Thanks be to God.

CAROL

*It Came upon the Midnight Clear*

ELW 282 vs. 1 & 3

**1** It came upon the midnight clear,  
that glorious song of old,  
from angels bending near the earth  
to touch their harps of gold:  
"Peace on the earth, good will to all,  
from heav'n's all-gracious king."  
The world in solemn stillness lay  
to hear the angels sing.

**3** And you, beneath life's crushing load,  
whose forms are bending low,  
who toil along the climbing way  
with painful steps and slow:  
look now, for glad and golden hours  
come swiftly on the wing;  
oh, rest beside the weary road  
and hear the angels sing!

Text: Edmund H. Sears, 1810-1876

(sit)

## THE SECOND LESSON

Isaiah 35:1-10

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus <sup>2</sup>it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God. <sup>3</sup>Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. <sup>4</sup>Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you." <sup>5</sup>Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; <sup>6</sup>then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; <sup>7</sup>the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp, the grass shall become reeds and rushes. <sup>8</sup>A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people; no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray. <sup>9</sup>No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed

shall walk there. <sup>10</sup>And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

**A** Word of God, Word of Life.

**G** Thanks be to God.

## CAROL

*Joy to the World*

ELW 267 vs. 1 & 4

**1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come!  
Let earth receive her king;  
let ev'ry heart prepare him room  
and heav'n and nature sing,  
and heav'n and nature sing,  
and heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.**

**4 He rules the world with truth and grace  
and makes the nations prove  
the glories of his righteousness  
and wonders of his love,  
and wonders of his love,  
and wonders, wonders of his love.**

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674-1748

## THE THIRD LESSON

**Matthew 1:1-17**

**A**n account of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham. <sup>2</sup>Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, <sup>3</sup>and Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, and Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Aram, <sup>4</sup>and Aram the father of Aminadab, and Aminadab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon, <sup>5</sup>and Salmon the father of Boaz by Rahab, and Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse, <sup>6</sup>and Jesse the father of King David. And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah, <sup>7</sup>and Solomon the father of Rehoboam, and Rehoboam the father of Abijah, and Abijah the father of Asaph, <sup>8</sup>and Asaph the father of Jehoshaphat, and Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of Uzziah, <sup>9</sup>and Uzziah the father of Jotham, and Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the father of Hezekiah, <sup>10</sup>and Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, and Manasseh the father of Amos, and Amos the father of Josiah, <sup>11</sup>and Josiah the father of Jechoniah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon. <sup>12</sup>And after the deportation to Babylon: Jechoniah was the father of Salathiel, and Salathiel the father of Zerubbabel, <sup>13</sup>and Zerubbabel the father of Abiud, and Abiud the father of Eliakim, and Eliakim the father of Azor, <sup>14</sup>and Azor the father of Zadok, and Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eliud, <sup>15</sup>and Eliud the father of Eleazar, and Eleazar the father of Matthan, and Matthan the father of Jacob, <sup>16</sup>and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called the Messiah. <sup>17</sup>So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; and from David to the deportation to Babylon, fourteen generations; and from the deportation to Babylon to the Messiah, fourteen generations.

**A** Word of God, Word of Life.

**G** Thanks be to God.

**1** Lo, how a rose e'er blooming  
 from tender stem hath sprung!  
 Of Jesse's lineage coming  
 as seers of old have sung,  
 it came, a flow'r so bright,  
 amid the cold of winter,  
 when half-spent was the night.

**2** Isaiah had foretold it,  
 the rose I have in mind;  
 with Mary we behold it,  
 the virgin mother kind.  
 To show God's love aright,  
 she bore to us a Savior,  
 when half-spent was the night.

Text: German carol, 15th cent.; tr. Theodore Baker, 1851-1934, sts. 1-2; Harriet R. Krauth, 1845-1925, st. 3; John C. Mattes, 1876-1948, st. 4

## THE FOURTH LESSON

**Luke 1:26-38**

**I**n the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, <sup>27</sup>to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. <sup>28</sup>And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." <sup>29</sup>But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. <sup>30</sup>The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. <sup>31</sup>And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. <sup>32</sup>He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. <sup>33</sup>He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." <sup>34</sup>Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" <sup>35</sup>The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. <sup>36</sup>And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. <sup>37</sup>For nothing will be impossible with God." <sup>38</sup>Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

**A** Word of God, Word of Life.

**C** Thanks be to God.

## CAROL

### *The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came*

**ELW 265 vs. 1 & 4**

- 1** The angel Gabriel from heaven came,  
 with wings as drifted snow, with eyes as flame:  
 "All hail to thee, O lowly maiden Mary,  
 most highly favored lady." Gloria!
- 4** Of her, Emmanuel, the Christ, was born  
 in Bethlehem all on a Christmas morn,  
 and Christian folk throughout the world will ever say:  
 "Most highly favored lady." Gloria!

Text: Basque carol; para. Sabine Baring-Gould, 1834-1924

## THE FIFTH LESSON

Matthew 1:18-25

**N**ow the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. <sup>19</sup>Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. <sup>20</sup>But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup>She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." <sup>22</sup>All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: <sup>23</sup>"Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us." <sup>24</sup>When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, <sup>25</sup>but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

Ⓐ Word of God, Word of Life.

☑ Thanks be to God.

### CAROL

*O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*

ELW 257 vs. 1 & 2

**1 O come, O come, Emmanuel,  
and ransom captive Israel,  
that mourns in lonely exile here  
until the Son of God appear.**

**2 O come, O Wisdom from on high,  
embracing all things far and nigh:  
in strength and beauty come and stay;  
teach us your will and guide our way. *Refrain***

*Refrain*

**Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
shall come to you, O Israel.**

Text: Psalteriolum Canticum Catholicarum, Köln, 1710; tr. composite  
Text sts. 2, 6, 7 © 1997 Augsburg Fortress.

## THE SIXTH LESSON

Luke 1:39-58

**I**n those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, <sup>40</sup>where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. <sup>41</sup>When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit <sup>42</sup>and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. <sup>43</sup>And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? <sup>44</sup>For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. <sup>45</sup>And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord." <sup>46</sup>And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, <sup>47</sup>and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, <sup>48</sup>for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; <sup>49</sup>for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. <sup>50</sup>His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. <sup>51</sup>He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. <sup>52</sup>He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; <sup>53</sup>he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. <sup>54</sup>He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, <sup>55</sup>according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever." <sup>56</sup>And Mary remained with her

about three months and then returned to her home.<sup>57</sup>Now the time came for Elizabeth to give birth, and she bore a son. <sup>58</sup>Her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown his great mercy to her, and they rejoiced with her.

**A** Word of God, Word of Life.

**G** Thanks be to God.

CAROL

*Canticle of the Turning*

ELW 723 vs. 1 & 3

- 1** My soul cries out with a joyful shout  
that the God of my heart is great,  
and my spirit sings of the wondrous things  
that you bring to the ones who wait.  
You fixed your sight on your servant's plight,  
and my weakness you did not spurn,  
so from east to west shall my name be blest.  
Could the world be about to turn?
- 3** From the halls of pow'r to the fortress tow'r,  
not a stone will be left on stone.  
Let the king beware for your justice tears  
ev'ry tyrant from his throne.  
The hungry poor shall weep no more,  
for the food they can never earn;  
there are tables spread, ev'ry mouth be fed,  
for the world is about to turn. *Refrain*

*Refrain*

**My heart shall sing of the day you bring.  
Let the fires of your justice burn.  
Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near,  
and the world is about to turn.**

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THE SEVENTH LESSON

Luke 2:1-7

**I**n those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. <sup>2</sup>This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. <sup>3</sup>All went to their own towns to be registered. <sup>4</sup>Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. <sup>5</sup>He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. <sup>6</sup>While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. <sup>7</sup>And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

**A** Word of God, Word of Life.

**G** Thanks be to God.

**1 O little town of Bethlehem,  
how still we see thee lie!  
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep  
the silent stars go by;  
yet in thy dark streets shineth  
the everlasting light.  
The hopes and fears of all the years  
are met in thee tonight.**

**3 How silently, how silently  
the wondrous gift is giv'n!  
So God imparts to human hearts  
the blessings of his heav'n.  
No ear may hear his coming;  
but, in this world of sin,  
where meek souls will receive him, still  
the dear Christ enters in.**

Text: Phillips Brooks, 1835-1893

## THE EIGHTH LESSON

**Luke 2:8-20**

**I**n that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup>Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup>But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see — I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: <sup>11</sup>to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. <sup>12</sup>This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." <sup>13</sup>And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, <sup>14</sup>"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!" <sup>15</sup>When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." <sup>16</sup>So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. <sup>17</sup>When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; <sup>18</sup>and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. <sup>19</sup>But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. <sup>20</sup>The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

**A** Word of God, Word of Life.

**G** Thanks be to God.

## CAROL

*Angels We Have Heard on High*

ELW 289 vs. 1-3

**1 Angels we have heard on high,  
sweetly singing o'er the plains,  
and the mountains in reply,  
echoing their joyous strains.**

**2 Shepherds, why this jubilee?  
Why your joyous strains prolong?  
What the gladsome tidings be  
which inspire your heav'nly song? *Refrain***

*Refrain*

**Gloria in excelsis Deo;  
gloria in excelsis Deo.**

**3 Come to Bethlehem and see  
him whose birth the angels sing;  
come, adore on bended knee  
Christ the Lord, the newborn king. *Refrain***

Text: French carol; tr. H. F. Hemy, The Crown of Jesus Music, 1864



In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, <sup>2</sup>asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage." <sup>3</sup>When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; <sup>4</sup>and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. <sup>5</sup>They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: <sup>6</sup>'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.'"<sup>7</sup>Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. <sup>8</sup>Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage." <sup>9</sup>When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. <sup>10</sup>When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. <sup>11</sup>On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. <sup>12</sup>And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

**A** Word of God, Word of Life.

**G** Thanks be to God.

(stand)

**CAROL**

*The First Noel*

**ELW 300 vs. 1 & 3**

- 1 The first Noel the angel did say  
was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;  
in fields where they lay, keeping their sheep,  
on a cold winter's night that was so deep.**

*Refrain*

**Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel!  
Born is the King of Israel.**

- 3 And by the light of that same star  
three wise men came from country far;  
to seek for a king was their intent,  
and to follow the star wherever it went. *Refrain***

Text: English traditional

## AFFIRMATION OF FAITH \*

- ☐ In the beginning was the Word,
- ☑ **and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.**
- ☐ He was in the beginning with God.
- ☑ **All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being.**
- ☐ What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people.
- ☑ **The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it.**
- ☐ There was a man sent from God whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him.
- ☑ **He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.**
- ☐ The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.
- ☑ **He was in the world, and the world came into being through him, yet the world did not know him.**
- ☐ He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.
- ☑ **And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.**

## THE PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

Response: ☐ Merciful God,  
☑ **hear our prayer.**

*(In our prayers today, during a time of silence, pray for those listed below and for others according to their needs)*

**Prayers This Week:** Martha Eckmann, Nita Mueller, Marce Picha, Gary Westerman

**On-going Care:** Cheri Biggs, John & Jane Bodnar, Don Burton, Ellie Carlson, Shirley Dietrich, Mike Edris, Jessica Hannon, Marilyn Hofeldt, Richard & Betty Holzer, Joan Jacobson-Trotter, Jason Klonglan, Orville & Julie Knapp, Ruth & Charles Martis, Lara McCormick, Idonna Meyer, Linda Peltz, Kathy Preininger, David Samaria, Jim West, Darlene White, Deb Woosley

**Other Prayers:** *Those serving in the military*— Wyatt Johnson, Tyler Johnston, Michael McNeill, Daniel Milstead, Cody Ray, Sheldon Skovgaard, Michael Vutov, Joel Woosley

**Other Prayers:** *Those serving in mission*— Rev. Chandran Paul Martin, India; Dr. Stephen & Jodi Swanson, Tanzania; Katie Larson, Colombia; Rev. Bridget Gautieri, Wittenburg Center, Germany; and Dan & Ginny Rath, international translators; our sister congregation, the American Church in Berlin, as they assist refugees from the war in Ukraine

**Other Prayers:** *Seminarians*— James Holzer, Katie Larson, Giselle Loucks

## THE PEACE IS SHARED

- P** The peace of Christ be with you always.
- G** And also with you.

## MEAL

*(sit)*

### THE OFFERING IS RECEIVED

*We glorify God in our giving. Our offering is an act of worship that makes the ministries of this church possible. We encourage everyone to give. If you are visiting with us today, please do not feel obligated to participate in this portion of worship. If you would like, use the QR code scanner on your smart phone to give online or place your offering in the plates that are located at the entrances to the Sanctuary. For those of you watching through our media outlets, if you are able, please mail in your offering or donate online. Thank you!*



## THE TABLE IS PREPARED

### OFFERTORY

*(stand)*

#### OFFERTORY HYMN

*In the Bleak Midwinter*

**ELW 294 vs. 2 & 3**

**2** Heaven cannot hold him,  
nor earth sustain;  
heav'n and earth shall flee away  
when he comes to reign;  
in the bleak midwinter  
a stable place sufficed  
the Lord God almighty,  
Jesus Christ.

**3** What can I give him,  
poor as I am?  
If I were a shepherd  
I would bring a lamb;  
if I were a wise man  
I would do my part;  
yet what I can I give him—  
give my heart.

Text: Christina Georgina Rossetti, 1830-1894

### OFFERING PRAYER

- P** God of abundance,
- G** receive and bless these gifts we have offered. Join our hearts with the song of the angels, and gather us at your table of celebration. Strengthen us to share with all the world the abundance of your grace upon grace, poured out in Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh. Amen.

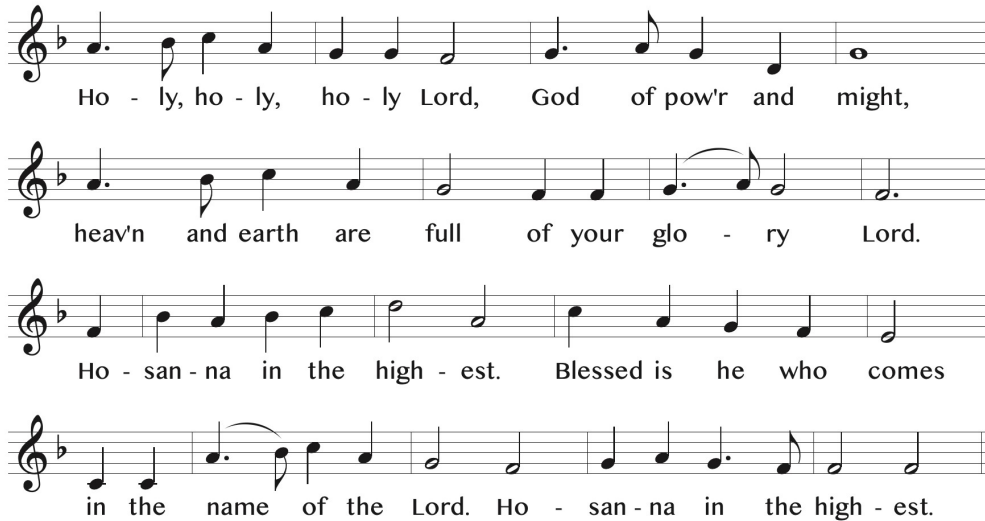
## HOLY COMMUNION

- P** The Lord be with you.
- G** And also with you.
- P** Lift up your hearts.
- G** We lift them to the Lord.
- P** Let us give thanks to the Lord,
- G** It is right to give our thanks and praise.

## PREFACE FOR SUNDAYS

- P** It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,  
... we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

## SANCTUS



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,  
heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry Lord.  
Ho - san - na in the high - est. Blessed is he who comes  
in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

## EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

- P** Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life: ...  
Do this for the remembrance of me.  
Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:
- C** **Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**
- P** With this bread and cup ...  
We look with hope for his coming.
- C** **Come, Lord Jesus.**
- P** Holy God, we long for your Spirit ...  
Bring the gift of peace on earth.
- C** **Come, Holy Spirit.**
- P** All praise and glory are yours, ...  
one God, now and forever.
- C** **Amen.**

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

☛ Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread;  
and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,  
forever and ever. Amen.

## ANGUS DEI



## INVITATION TO COMMUNION

- P** Come to the table of peace.  
**G** Glory to God in the highest!

## DISTRIBUTION

*All baptized Christians who confess Jesus Christ as Lord and his Real Presence in, with and under the bread and wine, are welcome to the Lord's Supper. We believe that this is the Lord's table and is he who invites you. So you who are strong in faith, come with gratitude. You who feel weak in faith, come to be strengthened. And you who feel you have no faith, come so that the God of steadfast love will touch your heart with hope and joy. The form of distribution is intinction: you will receive the consecrated bread and then you may dip the bread into the wine. Gluten free bread is available upon request.*

(sit)

## HYMNS DURING COMMUNION

*What Feast of Love*

**ELW 487**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>1 What feast of love is offered here,<br/>what banquet come from heaven?<br/>What food of everlasting life,<br/>what gracious gift is given?<br/>This, this is Christ the king,<br/>the bread come down from heaven.<br/>Oh, taste and see and sing!<br/>How sweet the manna given!</b></p> | <p><b>2 What light of truth is offered here,<br/>what covenant from heaven?<br/>What hope of everlasting life,<br/>what wondrous word is given?<br/>This, this is Christ the king,<br/>the sun come down from heaven.<br/>Oh, see and hear and sing!<br/>The Word of God is given!</b></p> |
| <p><b>3 What wine of love is offered here,<br/>what crimson drink from heaven?<br/>What stream of everlasting life,<br/>what precious blood is given?<br/>This, this is Christ the king,<br/>the sweetest wine of heaven.<br/>Oh, taste and see and sing!<br/>The Son of God is given!</b></p>    |  |

Text: Delores Dufner, OSB, b. 1939

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**1 Hark! The herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the newborn king;  
peace on earth, and mercy mild,  
God and sinners reconciled."  
Joyful, all you nations, rise;  
join the triumph of the skies;  
with angelic hosts proclaim,  
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"**

*Refrain*

**Hark! The herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the newborn king!"**

**2 Christ, by highest heav'n adored,  
Christ, the everlasting Lord,  
late in time behold him come,  
offspring of a virgin's womb.  
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see!  
Hail, incarnate deity!  
Pleased as man with us to dwell,  
Jesus, our Emmanuel! *Refrain***

**3 Hail the heav'n-born Prince of peace!  
Hail the Sun of righteousness!  
Light and life to all he brings,  
ris'n with healing in his wings.  
Mild he lays his glory by,  
born that we no more may die,  
born to raise each child of earth,  
born to give us second birth. *Refrain***

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788, alt.

*(stand)*

## **POST-COMMUNION BLESSING**

## **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

- ☞** God our redeemer,  
**☞** you have fed us at this table with gifts of grace, truth, and life. As you have gathered us in joy, send us forth as messengers of your peace. Make us shine with the good news of your glory, born to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

# SENDING

## BLESSING \*

- P** As you leave this place, may you go knowing that from generation to generation, we have been claimed and loved. From generation to generation, God has been by our side. From generation to generation, we are not alone. The God of yesterday and the God of tomorrow knows you by name, loves you, and calls you forth saying, “Go be the person you are called to be, love wildly, do justice, and come back soon.”
- C** May it be so.

## THREE-FOLD AMEN

## RECESSIONAL HYMN

*O Lord, Now Let Your Servant*

**ELW 313**

**1 O Lord, now let your servant  
depart in heav'nly peace,  
for I have seen the glory  
of your redeeming grace:  
a light to lead the nations  
unto your holy hill,  
the glory of your people,  
your chosen Israel.**

**2 Then grant that I may follow  
your gleam, O glorious Light,  
till earthly shadows scatter,  
and faith is changed to sight;  
till raptured saints shall gather  
upon that shining shore,  
where Christ, the blessed daystar,  
shall light them evermore.**

Text: Ernest E. Ryden, 1886-1981, alt., based on the Nunc dimittis  
Text © 1925 Board of Publication, Lutheran Church in America, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

## DISMISSAL

- P** Christ the Savior is born! Go in peace. Proclaim this good news.
- C** Thanks be to God.

## POSTLUDE



\*Liturgy & Lessons by Rev. Anna Strickland | A Sanctified Art LLC | Sanctifiedart.org

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### KOUNTZE STAFF

Pr. Lucy Wynard	Senior Pastor
Pr. Shari Duminy	Transitional Associate Pastor
Pr. Ashley Hall	Associate Pastor
Kristin Boe	Director of Faith Formation
Debbie Bogue	Office Manager
Danielle Barrett	Administrative Assistant
Noni Cambridge	Staff Treasurer
Judi Boe	Financial Secretary
Jim Smejkal	Bldg. Super./Dir. of Cong. Activities
Louis Flake	Night Manager
Kayla Slaight	Janitorial Staff
Barbara Carlsen	Dir. of Music & Fine Arts
Mark Jones	Organist
David Gerard	Saturday Accompanist
Shannon Picha	Nursery Director
Susann Henry	Food Pantry Director
Jill Conway	Director of Kountze Commons



# KOUNTZE

## Memorial Lutheran Church

2650 Farnam Street  
402-341-7761

Omaha, NE 68131  
[www.kmlchurch.org](http://www.kmlchurch.org)

**December 30 & 31, 2023**

*Kountze Memorial Lutheran Church is a vibrant, historic faith community that welcomes all and provides ministries for all ages and walks of life. We are a **"City-wide Church with a World-wide Ministry"** and have been worshiping, growing, and serving in downtown Omaha for over 160 years. If you are new to Kountze Memorial, we invite you to visit the Welcome Desk in the Fellowship Hall for more information about who we are and what we do.*

### **Today at Kountze Memorial**

#### **Holy Communion**

All who are baptized and trust in Christ's presence in Holy Communion are invited to commune at the Lord's Table. Children not yet communing will receive a blessing. It is the understanding of the universal Church that those who wish to commune with bread only (especially for health reasons) have communed fully. Our form of distribution is Intinction. You will receive the wafer in your hand and then dip into the wine.

#### **Children in Worship**

We believe that all are welcome in worship and encourage families to worship together. Activity bags, children's Bibles, and bulletins are available, as well as a room just off the west side of the main sanctuary, that includes a TV and a variety of toys, games, and books for young children.

#### **Nursery**

Our nursery is available from 8:45 AM—noon for children 0—2 years. Please ask an usher if you are unsure as to where our nursery is and would like to use it.

#### **Attendance Cards**

All those attending worship are encouraged to fill out the card included in your bulletin and place in the offering plate. Offering plates are located by the doors in the Nave.

#### **Large Print Bulletins and Listening Devices**

Please speak to an usher if you would like a large print bulletin or an assisted listening device.

#### **E-news & Social Media**

If you would like to receive our weekly e-news and monthly e-newsletter, add your e-mail address to the attendance card in your bulletin.

**Thank you for supporting the ministries of Kountze Memorial Lutheran Church.**



#### **Poinsettias**

Please feel free to take a poinsettia after any of the services this weekend. You can also stop by during regular office hours this week to pick one up.

#### **Kountze Café**

**9:30—11:00 AM**

Join us each Sunday for breakfast. The suggested donation is \$5 adults, \$2.50 children 12 and younger for the hot breakfast and a free-will donation for the continental breakfast.

#### **Altar Flowers, Eternal Candle, and TV Broadcast**

You can help us beautify the altar at Kountze or sponsor a television broadcast if you wish. This is a simple and meaningful way to honor a loved one who has passed away, celebrate a special anniversary or milestone, or can be given in thanksgiving for friends or family. Their names will appear in the church bulletin on the weekend you select. Altar Flowers are provided by Janousek Florist and the cost is \$20 a bouquet. The Eternal Candle is \$7.50. The television broadcast is \$210 per week. You can sign up for a date to provide flowers, eternal candle, and/or our television broadcast by signing up in the Narthex, calling the church office, going online to our giving page, or placing a check in the mail or offering plate marked "flowers, candle, or TV ministry. Please let us know if it is in honor/memory/celebration of someone. Thanks.

### **Faith Formation**

#### **Sunday School and Children's Choir**

**Ages 2 years-6<sup>th</sup> Grade**

Will not be held December 31, or January 7. Join us again on January 14. Sunday School will continue with the rotation model and Children's Choir students will join Barb Carlsen on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor in the Sunday School Music Room again on January 14.

## Today at Kountze Memorial, *continued*

### Youth Forum

#### Lower Level Youth Room

**10:10 AM**

Join us in the Youth Room again beginning January 14 for time of community, learning, and serving.

### Adult Forum

Join us at 10:10 AM on Sunday mornings in the Fellowship Hall. **This Week:** Fellowship **Next Week:** Lutheranism in America: Muhlenberg and Schmucker

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## This Week at Kountze Memorial

### December 31 Sunday

Christmas 1

New Year's Eve

9:00 AM & 11:00 AM Worship

9:00 AM Nursery (0-2 yrs)

10:10 AM Youth Forum/Adult Forum

### January 1 Monday

New Year's Day

OFFICE CLOSED

HAPPY  
NEW  
YEAR!



### January 2 Tuesday

9:00 AM Staff Meeting

### January 3 Wednesday

12:15 PM Worship

6:00 PM Confirmation @ St. Timothy

7:00 PM Adult Choir Rehearsal

### January 4 Thursday

2:00 PM Cards with Friends

4:00 PM Healing Gift Free Clinic

### January 5 Friday

5:00 PM Pantry

### January 6 Saturday

Epiphany of Our Lord

Homebound Communion

5:00 PM Worship

### January 7 Sunday

Baptism of Our Lord

Homebound Communion

8:00 AM & 10:00 AM Adult Choir

Rehearsal

9:00 AM & 11:00 AM Worship

9:00 AM Nursery (0-2 yrs)

9:15 AM Children's Choir (K-5)

9:30 AM Kountze Cafe - Breakfast

10:10 AM Faith Formation Hour

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## For Your Calendar/News & Notes

### ELCA Young Adult Gathering

#### Young Adults (19-25-year-olds)

**July 16-20, 2024, in New Orleans**

An ELCA Young Adult Gathering will take place at the same time as the ELCA National Youth Gathering. Each group will have separate daytime offerings followed by a joint Evening Program. As this is a new event, plans are still being made. We hope you will consider attending this event. Please contact Pr. Shari or the church office if you are interested in attending. For more info or to register, go to <https://www.elca.church/gathering/attend/young-adult-gathering>

### Cards with Friends

**Thursday, January 4**

**2:00 PM**

Meet in the Fellowship Hall for a time together playing cards. All are welcome. Bring a snack to share.

### Confirmation Resumes

**January 10**

**6:00 PM**

Confirmation resumes at St. Timothy's Lutheran Church.

### Confirmation Photos

If you have any group photos from 2017 - 2021 and you would be willing to share with the church office, we would be most grateful. We want to make sure we have a photo of each of the Confirmation Classes of KMLC.

### Kountze Family Service Project:

**Friday, January 12**

**5:00 PM**

Join us in the Pantry to volunteer and then following the service to our community, we will be serving pizza and watching a movie in the Fellowship Hall. Bring a friend, your favorite movie, and a snack to share.

### Middle School Gathering

**Grades 6-8**

**January 13-14, 2024**

We will be gathering at Sheridan Lutheran Church in Lincoln. The cost will be covered by Kountze Memorial. Registration deadline is January 1, 2024.

### New Member Class

**January 14 & 21**

**10:15 PM**

If you are interested in finding out more about Kountze Memorial or would like to join our congregation, we ask you to consider attending our next New Member Class. Childcare is available. Please plan on attending both classes. New members will be received on Sunday, January 28. Please call the church office if you have questions and let us know if you plan to attend.

## High School Retreat for Grades 9-12

### Carol Joy Holling Camp

January 19-21, 2024

#### Theme: (un)Equal

Come and join us as we dive into this past summer's theme, "UnEqual". Along with the lessons we will learn about God's love, we will also be experiencing some favorite camp activities, God's creation, and of course, fellowship! Cost \$100 per camper. This cost includes lodging, meals, and programming on Friday through Sunday. Register by January 17 at <https://www.cjhcenter.org/hs-retreat>

## Annual Reports

### Due January 28

If you are responsible for a report in our Annual Report, please have them turned in to Debbie Bogue no later than January 28. Reports are welcome—and preferred—anytime before that date. Thanks.

## Dinners for 8

Consider signing up to join a dinners for 8 group in February, March, and April. It is a time when your group will have a meal together each month. This meal can take place in homes, in restaurants, or at the church. Or you may decide to attend a fish fry or another organization's fundraiser. It is up to your group. Please **sign up by January 21** at the Welcome Desk or by calling the church office. You will be informed about the groups, so you can begin to find times and places to meet.

## Summer Bible Camp at Carol Joy Holling!

### Register by January 31 for Early Bird Pricing

Kountze Memorial will cover the cost if you register by January 31. If you register after this date, you will need to pay the additional cost. Kountze Camp Week is June 16-21, but you can attend camp whenever it is convenient for you. Check out the schedule for the different camp opportunities for grades K-12 as well as day camps and leadership training for high school-age youth and Special Needs camps at <https://www.caroljoyholling.org/register>

In order for the church to pay the fee, choose

- to mail your payment,
- select "Pay items in Full"
- then "Pay by Check/Money Order"
- Email a copy of the receipt to [shari@kmlchurch.org](mailto:shari@kmlchurch.org)

and we will submit payment on behalf of your youth. If you have any questions, please reach out to church staff. To register go to

<https://www.caroljoyholling.org/register>

## Join Us in Spreading Joy: Offer a Ride to Church!

Are you looking for a simple yet impactful way to make a difference in someone's day? Consider sharing the gift of a ride to church! Your willingness to offer a ride even one or two weeks a month can brighten someone else's Sunday. Please call or email the church office to see if there's someone in your neighborhood or on your way to church that would like a ride. Open your heart and car doors to help others experience the joy of attending church.

## Altar Flowers, Eternal Candle, & TV Broadcast

The new sign up posters are now available. Be sure to sign up for your special date early so it's still available. Altar Flowers are provided by Janousek Florist and cost \$20 a bouquet. The Eternal Candle is \$7.50 and sponsoring a TV broadcast is \$210.

## Just a Reminder

If you have changed your pledge for 2024, please remember that your automatic giving will only be altered if we receive written confirmation from you or if you've specifically indicated this change by checking the box on your 2024 pledge card. You can e-mail Debbie in the church office to make changes if you would like. Simply Giving info and registration forms can be found at the Welcome Desk.

## 2023 Contribution Note:

In order for your offerings to be counted toward your 2023 giving, it needs to be in the office or postmarked no later than December 31, 2023. Thank you for your ongoing dedication and support.

## Kountze Food Pantry

Thank-you to everyone who donated to the Food Pantry and made this Christmas special for our guests! St. Michael Church contributed 200 goody bags with laundry soap and many items we don't usually have. Kountze provided 250 bags with a complete hygiene kit. Several groups collected toys and books for the children and the common room was beautifully decorated! In January the Pantry is collecting gloves and mittens for men, women and children. We get lots of hats donated but never seem to have enough gloves. If you would like to contribute you may leave the items in the donation box in Fellowship Hall. Another option is to order online and have them delivered to Kountze in care of the Pantry. As always, we are looking for volunteers. If you would like to donate your time, you may sign up at the following link:

<https://form.jotform.com/200834787701155>

## Attendance & Giving

**Saturday:** 35

**Sunday: 9:00:** 84

**Wednesday: 12:15:** 5

**Total:** 129

**Christmas Eve: 4:00:** 245 **7:00:** 251 **11:00:** 80

**Christmas Day:** 25

**Streaming:** (Sunday & Wednesday) 107

**Medical Clinic Guests Served:** 22

**Offering:**

\$24,679.16 (Regular)                      \$15,782.34 (Specials)

\$10,168.21 (Debt Reduction)

*Praise God for salvation and all of creation.*

### DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	Luke 2:22-40	Jesus presented in the temple
Monday	Isaiah 61:10-63:3	Rejoice in the Lord
Tuesday	Galatians 4:4-7	Adoption as God's children
Wednesday	Psalms 24	Entrance into the temple
Thursday	Romans 8:18-25	Future glory
Friday	Job 12:7-10	If you want to learn
Saturday	Psalms 148	All creation praises God
Sunday	Mark 1:4-11	The baptism of Jesus



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Written by Pr. Greg Priebbenow and edited by Vibrant Faith Ministries.  
Go to [www.vibrantfaithathome.org](http://www.vibrantfaithathome.org) for more faith-forming activities.

### SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

*Let them [all parts of creation] praise the name of the LORD, for his name alone is exalted; his glory is above earth and heaven.*

**Psalms 148:13 (NRSV)**

### PRAYERS AND BLESSING

#### A Prayer for the Week:

Creator God, help us to see how deep and wide your saving work for all creation is, a love that is seen most clearly through Jesus, the one born in Bethlehem. Amen.

#### Mealtime Prayer:

Dear God, with sheep and cattle and all creation, we thank you for feeding us each day with food from the earth and with your saving grace through Jesus. Amen.

#### A Blessing to Give:

May God give you and all creation peace through Jesus.

### CARING CONVERSATIONS

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- What does creation care mean to you?
- How do you show praise to God for all that God has created?

### DEVOTIONS

*Read:* Psalms 148.

Psalms 148 states that creation belongs to God, and God has promised creation a future forever (v.6). Jesus being born in Bethlehem places creation front and center as part of the saving work of God. From angels to sun and moon to shining stars, from earth to sea monsters, from fire and hail to stormy winds, the list goes on and on to include all of creation as the recipients of God's saving work. God's saving grace is not just for humans. The Apostle Paul names this when he writes in Romans 8:21, "*creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay.*" What God has done in bringing us a Savior far exceeds all that we can imagine, even having all of creation join us in praise to God. When we look through the verses in many Christmas hymns, we are reminded that creation is often part of the Christmas message.

*Discuss:* How does Psalms 148 help you think anew about God's saving work in Christ?

*Pray:* **O God, our creator and redeemer, we thank you for your love that extends to all of creation through Jesus Christ, born to us in Bethlehem. Amen.**

### SERVICE

Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings and theme for this week, in what way can you show care for God's creation?

### RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

When Mary and Joseph brought Jesus to the temple, Simeon and Anna, prophets who had waited all their lives for Jesus, recognized him as the Promised One. Luke 2:29-32 is known as the *Nunc Dimittis*, Latin for "now let depart." This is Simeon's song of praise making it clear that God acted in a way that gives peace for all people. The words of Simeon's song are often used for evening worship. Write a list of words that give you peace. *Pray:* **Loving God, we thank you for Simeon, Anna, and all those throughout history who have lifted-up Jesus as the hope and peace for all the world. Amen.**

**NEXT WEEK'S READINGS:** Genesis 1:1-5; Psalms 29  
Acts 19:1-7; Mark 1:4-11